

The Journey of Rehabilitation

Illustrated Case Studies Show the Way

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COURSE OBJECTIVE

The following case studies contain illustrated case documents designed to familiarize new counselors with the rehabilitation process while emphasizing the essential requirements of the Rehabilitation Act. The case studies are also intended to further develop counselor skill in the areas of case management—the science of our discipline--and counseling—the art.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

HOW TO USE CASE STUDIES

LEGEND OF SYMBOLS

Case Study Number 1: **JUVENILE DIABETES**

Case Study Number 2: **ASPERGERS DISORDER, AUTISM**

Case Study Number 3: **LEARNING DISABILITY**

Case Study Number 4: **HEARING IMPAIRMENT**

Case Study Number 5: **DEGENERATIVE DISC DISEASE**

INTRODUCTION

Vocational Rehabilitation is a remarkable and complex process wherein an individual with a disability overcomes barriers in order to achieve vocational and personal independence. For illustrative purposes the rehabilitation process, in the following case studies, is likened to a journey traveled by a driver (an individual with a disability) and his/her navigator (a skilled counselor).

It is the driver's role to learn all he can about himself so that he is able to make informed choices about his destination (vocational goal) and what he requires to get there (vocational rehabilitation services). It is the navigator's role to *ensure* the driver has all the information he needs to make informed decisions, and to provide skilled and supportive guidance along the way.


HOW TO USE THE CASE STUDIES

Each case study is comprised of a series of key case documents that represent each of five phases of the rehabilitation process from initial contact to case closure. The documents may include the following: *Initial Interview Report, Certificate of Eligibility, Case Notes, Rationale for Goal and Services, Individual Plan of Employment, Progress Review Notes, Annual Review of IPE, and Case Closure Summary.*

The sidebar on the right side of each document will highlight the *Rehabilitation Act Requirements* that must be captured in case documentation. The titles of case documents and/or their formatting will vary from state to state. The content, however, should not; the Rehab Act requirements remain constant no matter where a counselor practices.

Additionally, along the way, you may encounter *Practice Tips* and other *Case Considerations* to help you build insight and advanced counseling skill.






LEGEND OF SYMBOLS

To help you navigate through the case studies, photographic symbols have been assigned to represent key phases of the rehabilitation process and the corresponding documents of each phase. The information contained in the documents is your proof that you have attended to the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act. Again, the symbols have been assigned to help you navigate the process and to help you remember important aspects of that phase. *For example, when you think of the “Eligibility Determination” phase of the rehab process, you should automatically think of the “Key Questions” associated with that phase (represented by the  symbol), and your “Certificate of Eligibility” should prove you asked and answered those questions.*






Before proceeding to the case studies, please familiarize yourself with the PHASES OF REHABILITATION, the corresponding KEY DOCUMENTS of each phase, and the SYMBOLS assigned to represent them. Please see the chart on the following pages.

Please note some of the case study elements are meant to be tutorial in nature and will be repeated from one case study to the next. The repetition is intended, as it is an effective way in which to cement necessary information into your memory and practice. Once you're familiar with the symbols, please select a Case Study to review.

Fasten your seatbelt and enjoy the ride...we hope you'll learn a lot along the way!

REHAB PHASE	KEY DOCUMENTS	SYMBOL
<u>I</u> Application (Status 02)	<u>Initial Interview Report</u> The initial interview is an exchange of information between the client & counselor. The counselor provides information regarding the rehab process, & about client rights, responsibilities & remedies. The client shares information about his/her disability, limitations, and aspirations. This Initial Interview Report is a summary of that exchange. It is a SNAPSHOT of the client's life and situation; it tells the client's story.	
<u>II</u> Eligibility Determination (Status 02)	<u>Certificate of Eligibility</u> An eligibility determination is made by systematically answering a series of KEY QUESTIONS regarding the individual's disability, her functional limitations, whether or not they prove to be substantial impediments to employment, and whether or not she <i>requires</i> services to prepare for, secure, and maintain suitable employment.	
<u>III</u> Assessment & Planning (Status 10, 12)	<u>Rationale for Goal and Services</u> The assessment and planning phase is a time for exploration and discovery. The counselor helps the client to explore his interests and abilities so that he may eventually discover a suitable vocational goal or DESTINATION . Once the destination is identified, the counselor helps the client identify PROVISIONS for that particular destination. Said another way, the counselor helps the client identify his vocational goal and what he <i>requires</i> to get there. In this area the Rehab Act specifies that you should pack light, taking only what you need and not necessarily what you want. The Rationale for Goal and Services is a written justification for the goal & services a counselor has agreed to support.	
<u>IV</u> IPE Progress Review (Status 14, 16, 18, 20, 22)	<u>Individual Plan for Employment (IPE)</u> <u>Progress Reviews</u> The IPE is the ROAD MAP to the client's goal or destination. It outlines the route (what the client and the VR program will do to help the client achieve his goal) and the ETA (estimated time of arrival), otherwise known as the "goal end date." With scheduled progress reviews, clients and counselors can avoid getting lost with frequent referral to the map!	
<u>V</u> Rehabilitation Outcome (Status 30, 28, 26)	<u>Case Closure Summary</u> In a successful case closure (26), the client's achievement of her goal and the agency's contributions to that accomplishment are documented. In this case, a congratulatory handshake is in order! On the other hand, while we strive, side-by-side, with our clients for successful outcomes, they do not always occur. Sometimes clients relocate and sometimes life circumstances interfere. Either way, a respectful and courteous exchange between client and counselor, wherein the client knows she is welcome to reapply, is always desirable.	

Throughout the history of the case, a counselor will make case notes, which should reflect her thinking process and rationale. If properly documented, any authorized individual who reviews the file (supervisor, case auditor) can determine the direction of the case and whether or not it is in compliance agency, state, and federal regulations.

<p>Ongoing Case Management (All Phases &Statuses)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Case Note</u></p> <p>Question: Why do Americans drive on the right side of the road, buckle their seatbelts, and stop at red lights? Answer: Because it’s the law! The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is THE LAW in the land of rehabilitation. Just as traffic laws protect drivers, the Rehab Act—the highest level of authority in rehabilitation—protects clients. Violations can result in a loss of funding. Know the law.</p> <p>Throughout the rehabilitation journey, clients may encounter a complication or a CURVE IN THE ROAD, which can derail the rehabilitation process. Often, complications are related to unmet basic needs such food, housing, and transportation. Additionally, complications can be related to a lack of proper information.</p> <p>Knowledgeable counselors are excellent brokers of information and services. They can help their clients stay on the rehab road—so to speak—by referring them to appropriate RESOURCES for services (often related to basic needs), community rehabilitation providers, and disability information (often related to treatment, accommodations, etc.).</p> <p>Sometimes the rehab journey can become so complicated, it can be doggone confusing! When this happens—and it will—for the sake of all parties involved, it’s a good idea to stop and ask questions for clarification. In other words, it’s advisable to employ your CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS!</p> <p>Over the past 85 years, seasoned counselors have developed a repertoire of best practices that can simply be described as GOOD IDEAS relative to case management and counseling. This symbol represents a practice tip or good idea that you may want to consider when carrying out your duties as a VR counselor.</p>	    
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